

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 15, 16, 23-27, and 30-33 are pending in this application by way of the present amendment. In this amendment, claims 1, 15, and 23 have been amended and claims 30-33 added. No new matter has been added.

Election/Restrictions

The Examiner has restricted claims 28 and 29 from examination as being mutually exclusive species in an intermediate-final product relationship. Applicants respectfully traverse with respect to claim 29. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 29 is not an independent invention and does not have an intermediate-final product relationship. Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for conducting a brief telephone interview on July 14, 2003. In that interview, the Examiner acknowledged that claim 29 appears to have been restricted from examination by mistake. Withdrawal of the restriction of claim 29 is respectfully requested.

102(b) Rejections

Claims 1-3, 5, 15, 16, and 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wada (U.S. Patent No. 4,027,346) for the reasons of record. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Independent claims 1 and 23 recite a fiber coated with a block copolymer and an ion complex of at least an anionic surfactant and a cationic surfactant. In contrast, Wada does not teach or suggest coating a fiber with an ion complex of at least an anionic surfactant and a cationic surfactant. Rather, Wada discloses surface active agents that are anion and nonion surface active agents (col. 5, ll. 42-68) and adding an adsorption promoting agent or an aggregation adjusting agent, such as water-soluble salts, such as certain ammonium salts (col. 6, l. 34 to col. 7, l. 10). Wada expressly states that in its process the “water-soluble ingredients having lower affinities are left in the residual liquid. In contrast with this, when the fibers are treated by the conventional pad dry cure method, even the water-soluble ingredients having lower affinities will be imparted.” Col. 3, ll. 53-58 (emphasis added). Thus, even if the water-soluble ammonium salts disclosed in Wada were considered to be cationic surfactants, Wada expressly states that its coating does not contain an ion complex

containing a cationic surfactant, as recited in claims 1 and 23, for example. Similarly, claim 15 recites the presence of an ion complex on the fiber surface.

Accordingly, Claims 1, 15, 23, and their respective dependent claims patentably distinguish over Wada.

103(a) Rejection

Claims 6 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wada in view of Suzuki (U.S. Patent No. 5,262,460).

As stated above, the claimed invention patentably distinguishes over Wada. The deficiencies of Wada are not corrected by Suzuki. Hence, claims 1, 23, and their respective dependent claims 6 and 27 patentably distinguish over Wada, Suzuki, and the combination thereof.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that the claims as presently written are allowable. Hence, Applicants request that the amendment be entered and an early and favorable action of allowance be granted.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4200 to discuss any information concerning this application.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit any overpayment to Kenyon & Kenyon Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

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